

REPORT

ON THE

Sanitary Condition

OF THE

Kirkham Urban

: District :

FOR THE YEAR 1918.



CHARLES COURT, M.B.,

Medical Officer of Health.

KIRKHAM :

PRINTED BY J. RIGBY, POULTON STREET AND BIRLEY STREET.
1919.



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*To the Chairman and Members of the Kirkham
Urban District Council.*

LADY AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present for your consideration my Annual Report on the Health and Sanitary Administration of the Urban District of Kirkham for the year ended 31st December, 1918.

The Local Government Board, in a Memorandum dated 16th January, 1919, suggested that the Annual Reports of Medical Officers of Health for the year 1918 should be brief, giving the vital statistics for the year so that the records of the district may be continuous, with only a short account of any outbreak of disease, and other prominent sanitary events of the year.

Under the system adopted two years ago, with a view to effecting economies as regards Medical Officers' Annual Reports, the Registrar-General has supplied to the district Medical Officers of Health, through the County Public Health Department, the figures relative to population, births and deaths during the year under report. The year to which these returns refer is the calendar year, and the number of births and deaths "registered" may differ slightly on this account from the local records for the 52 weeks.

AREA.—The area of the Kirkham Urban District, according to the census report, is 857 statute acres.

POPULATION.—The populations supplied by the Registrar-General for the purposes of this report are as under :—

For calculating the birth-rate	...	3,673
„ „ death-rate	...	3,278

The death-rate population excludes all non-civilian males, whether serving at home or abroad. The birth-rate (and marriage-rate) population, on the other hand, is intended to include all the elements of the population contributing to the birth and marriage-rates ; it consists, therefore, of the death-rate, or civilian population, plus all non-civilians enlisted from this country, whether serving at home or abroad.

VITAL STATISTICS.

BIRTHS AND BIRTH-RATE.—The number of births reported by the Registrar-General as registered in the Urban District in 1918 was 68—males 34, females 34. Last year the registered births numbered 60. There were 12 illegitimate births registered during the year.

The birth-rate, calculated on the population above referred to (3,673), was equal to 18·5 per 1,000, against a rate of 16·1 last year, and an average of 20·2 for the 10 years 1908-17.

The provisional birth-rate for the whole of England and Wales for 1918 corresponded to 17·7 per 1,000 of the estimated population.

DEATHS AND DEATH-RATES.—The deaths registered in the Urban District during the year totalled 52, and to these must be added 5 deaths which occurred outside the district of persons belonging thereto, making the deaths actually belonging to Kirkham 57, or 10 less than the total for the preceding twelve months.

The tabulated statement below, supplied by the Registrar-General, analyses the causes of death distinguishing males and females :—

CAUSES OF DEATH	Males	Females
All Causes (Civilians only)	23	34
Enteric Fever.....	..	..
Small-pox .....	..	..
Measles .....	..	..
Scarlet Fever.....	..	..
Whooping Cough .....	..	..
Diphtheria and Croup	1	3
Influenza	3	6
Erysipelas .....	..	..
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	1	3
Tuberculous Meningitis.....	..	1
Other Tuberculous Diseases .....	..	..
Cancer, Malignant Disease.....	..	3
Rheumatic Fever .....	..	..
Meningitis .....	..	..
Organic Heart Disease	1	..
Bronchitis	1	1
Pneumonia (all forms)	4	4
Other Respiratory Diseases .....	..	..
Diarrhoea, etc. (under 2 years).....	..	..
Appendicitis and Typhlitis .....	..	..
Cirrhosis of Liver.....	..	..
Alcoholism .....	..	..
Nephritis and Bright's Disease ....	..	..
Puerperal Fever .....	..	1
Parturition, apart from Puerperal Fever .....	..	..
Congenital Debility, etc.	1	1
Violence, apart from Suicide .....	..	..
Suicide	1	..
Other Defined Diseases	10	11
Causes ill-defined or unknown.....	..	..
Special Causes (included above):—		
Cerebro-spinal Fever.....	..	..
Poliomyelitis .....	..	..
Deaths of infants under 1 year of age	2	2
Illegitimate.....	1	1
Total Births	34	34
Legitimate	29	27
Illegitimate	5	7

Population for Birth-rate 3,673.
 ,, Death-rate 3,278.

The death-rate, calculated on the estimated civilian population previously referred to, viz., 3,278, corresponded to 17·3 per 1,000, against the rate of 20·0 last year, and 17·5 for the 10 years 1908-17.

The death-rate for the whole of England and Wales in 1918 was 17·6 per 1,000.

DEATHS FROM THE PRINCIPAL EPIDEMIC DISEASES.—Four deaths were recorded under this head, viz., Diphtheria males 1, females 3, corresponding to a rate of 1·22 per 1,000 of the population. Last year 2 deaths under this heading were recorded, or a rate of 0·59. The average rate for the preceding 10 years was 2·0.

PHTHISIS (Pulmonary Tuberculosis).—To this cause 4 deaths were ascribed (males 1, females 3), or a death-rate of 1·22 per 1,000 of the population, as compared with a rate of 2·09 last year, and 1·12 in 1916. The 10 years average was 1·45.

BRONCHITIS, PNEUMONIA AND INFLUENZA.—Bronchitis was the cause of 2 deaths, Pneumonia 8 deaths, and Influenza 9 deaths. Last year these figures were respectively 2, 3 and 1. Special reports on the Influenza Epidemic were sent to the Local Government Board and to the County Medical Officer of Health, as requested. Further notes on this disease will be found under the heading of Epidemic Diseases.

INFANT MORTALITY.—Only 4 deaths of infants under the age of one year were recorded (males 2, females 2), against 8 deaths in the preceding year and 9 deaths in 1916.

The infant mortality rate, calculated per 1,000 registered births, was 58, the lowest rate ever recorded for the district. In 1917 this rate corresponded to 133, 155 in 1916, and an average of 172 for the 10 years 1908-17.

The four infant deaths occurred in Marsden Street, Orders Lane, Freckleton Street and Preston Street.

The tabulated statement below compares the birth-rate and death-rates for 1918 with those of the preceding year and the mean of 10 years 1908-17 :—

Per 1,000 of Population.												Rate of Deaths under 1 year to 1,000 Births
				Birth-rate		Death-rate		Epidemic Death-rate		Phthisis Death-rate		
1918	..	..	..	18·5	..	17·3	..	1·22	..	1·22	..	58
1917	..	..	..	16·1	..	20·0	..	0·59	..	2·09	..	133
Mean of 10 years (1908-17)				20·2	..	17·5	..	2·00	..	1·45	..	172

*Increase or Decrease
in 1918 on :—*

Previous year	...	+ 2·4	...	- 2·7	...	+ 0·63	...	- 0·87	...	- 75
Ten years' average	- 1·7	...	- 0·2	...	- 0·78	...	- 0·23	...	- 114	

EPIDEMIC DISEASES.

Under the Infectious Diseases Notification Act, 17 cases were notified :—Measles 9, Scarlet Fever 1, Diphtheria 5, Enteric 1 and Puerperal Fever 1.

In addition, under the Public Health (Tuberculosis) Regulations, 7 cases were notified—4 Pulmonary and 3 Non-Pulmonary.

Of the cases notified, excluding those of Measles and Tubercular Disease, 6 were removed to the Isolation Hospital, Moss Side, viz. :—Diphtheria 4, Scarlet Fever 1 and Enteric 1. One case of Encephalitis (which disease became notifiable in January, 1919) was also removed to the Hospital in December, 1918, thus making a total of 7 altogether.

There is again a considerable reduction in the number of notifications compared with last year ; but owing to the severity of the Diphtheria cases the epidemic rate is consequently slightly more than that of 1917.

ISOLATION HOSPITALS.

Two Isolation Hospitals are available, viz., the Fylde Joint Isolation Hospital at Moss Side for ordinary infectious diseases, and the Preston, Fylde and Garstang Smallpox Hospital at Elswick.

The following table gives the months in which the various epidemic diseases occurred :—

			Measles		Scarlet Fever		Diphtheria and Membranous Croup		Enteric		Puerperal Fever		Tuber- culosis
January	..	..	—	..	—	..	1	..	—	..	—	..	—
February	..	..	—	..	—	..	1	..	—	..	—	..	—
March	..	..	1	..	—	..	1	..	—	..	—	..	1
April	..	..	—	..	—	..	1	..	—	..	—	..	—
May	..	..	1	..	1	..	1	..	—	..	—	..	1
June	..	..	—	..	—	..	—	..	—	..	—	..	3
July	..	..	1	..	—	..	—	..	—	..	—	..	1
August	..	..	6	..	—	..	—	..	—	..	—	..	—
September	..	..	—	..	—	..	—	..	—	..	—	..	—
October	..	..	—	..	—	..	—	..	—	..	—	..	—
November	..	..	—	..	—	..	—	..	1	..	1	..	1
December	..	..	—	..	—	..	—	..	—	..	—	..	—
Total	..	..	9		1		5		1		1		7

MEASLES.

Cases 9. Deaths 0.

As shown in the foregoing table, the reduction in the number of notifications has continued. There were only 9 cases this year, compared with 22 in 1917. There were no fatalities. The continued reduction of the number of cases, in my opinion, is due to the early notification and to the steps taken to prevent the spreading of this disease.

SCARLET FEVER.

Cases 1. Deaths 0.

DIPHTHERIA.

Cases 5. Deaths 4.

These cases of Diphtheria lasted from January to May. Two cases were fatal at the Hospital and 2 at home.

Of the 5 cases, 2 occurred in Marsden Street and 1 in Preston Street. The Marsden Street cases originated in houses where the sanitary arrangements were out of date, and in the Preston Street case the house was overcrowded. In the other 2 cases no cause could be ascribed.

ENTERIC FEVER.

Cases 1. Deaths 0.

This case was rather severe, but no cause of its origin could be traced.

PUERPERAL FEVER.

Cases 1. Deaths 1.

This case was rather a serious one, as the person had been in a bad state of health for some months previously, and notwithstanding every care and precaution it terminated fatally.

TUBERCULAR DISEASE.

Cases 7. Deaths 5.

There have been 7 cases notified during the year—4 of Pulmonary and 3 Non-Pulmonary.

Last year the Phthisis (Tubercular) rate was 2·09 per 1,000, and this year it is 1·22, thus showing a reduced mortality from this disease. Of the 5 fatalities, 3 had been notified in previous years. In one case, however, the death was accelerated by a severe attack of influenza. The fifth case was certified at death as “Meningitis, probably Tubercular.”

INFLUENZA.

Deaths 9.

Influenza became prevalent in the first week of July, and continued with more or less severity until the month of December. In November a more complicated type prevailed, as many of these cases were associated with respiratory

troubles, such as Bronchitis and Pneumonia, which resulted in 5 fatalities during this month. I might mention that two other deaths were sporadic cases, and took place earlier in January and February. This disease was without doubt introduced from outlying districts. The people of the locality were having their annual holidays at the end of June and beginning of July, and were visiting Blackpool and other places where Influenza was prevalent at the time.

Distribution of precautionary advice to the public was effected by means of posters and pamphlets to every house.

The film, "Dr. Wise on Influenza," was also loaned by the Medical Officer of the Local Government Board, and shown at the Picture Hall.

I might mention that children were excluded from all places of entertainment during school closure, according to instructions from the Local Government Board.

The methods adopted to prevent the spreading of the disease seem to have been successful, considering the small number of fatalities compared with other places.

The districts in which Infantile Deaths, Infectious Diseases and Tubercular cases occurred:—

DISTRICT					Infantile Deaths		Infectious Diseases		Tubercular Diseases
Church Street .. .. .	..	..	..	..	—	..	2	..	—
Preston Street .. .. .	..	..	..	..	1	..	3	..	—
Poulton Street .. .. .	..	..	..	..	—	..	2	..	—
Marsden Street.. .. .	..	..	..	..	1	..	2	..	2
Freckleton Street .. ..	..	..	..	..	1	..	—	..	1
Station Road .. .. .	..	..	..	..	—	..	2	..	—
Sunny Bank .. .. .	..	..	..	..	—	..	1	..	—
Dyer Street .. .. .	..	..	..	..	—	..	1	..	—
Ward Street .. .. .	..	..	..	..	—	..	1	..	—
Fylde Street .. .. .	..	..	..	..	—	..	1	..	—
Ribby Road .. .. .	..	..	..	..	—	..	1	..	—
Orders Lane .. .. .	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	1
Clegg Street .. .. .	..	..	..	..	—	..	—	..	1
Mill Street .. .. .	..	..	..	..	—	..	—	..	1
Marquis Street .. .. .	..	..	..	..	—	..	—	..	1
					—		—		—
					4		17		7
					—		—		—

It is gratifying to see the Infantile death-rate reduced from 133 per 1,000 births in 1917 to 58 in this year. As mentioned previously, this is the lowest rate ever recorded for the district.

At the commencement of the year the County Council appointed a Health Visitor, who doubtless has effected a great improvement in the care and nursing of the infants. At the same time great credit is due to the local midwife, a qualified C.M.B., who has also co-operated in instilling knowledge of infant welfare ; and, in my opinion, the great improvement in the infant mortality is due in a great measure to these nurses.

I think also the scarcity of milk supplied in the district has had a certain and beneficial effect in reducing the infantile mortality, as the mothers have been compelled to suckle their children. In this way diseases such as enteritis and gastric troubles, which are so prevalent amongst infants as the result of artificial feeding, have been obviated. Of all the evils which have been ascribed to rationing there has been, at any rate, one good result ; and I hope that the natural method of feeding infants, whenever possible, will be continued.

SCHOOLS.

Owing to the prevalence of Influenza the following schools were closed :—

C.E. Schools, for a period of two weeks from August 19th.

Council School, for a period of two weeks from November 4th.

R.C. Schools, Willows, for a period of three weeks from November 18th.

C.E. Schools, for a period of two weeks from November 19th.

The sanitary conditions of the schools have been generally satisfactory. I might mention again, however, that the playground of the Willows R.C. School requires flagging.

CHEMICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL WORK.—There have been 10 examinations of swabs for the detection of the diphtheritic germ, and 1 examination of sputum for the purpose of diagnosing Tuberculosis.

The chemical and bacteriological work is undertaken by Prof. Delépine, of Manchester.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT.—Fifteen specimens were examined :—6 of milk, 2 ground rice, 1 baking powder, 1 ground ginger, 1 Epsom salts, 2 white pepper, 1 coffee and 1 custard powder, all of which were found genuine, except in the case of 1 sample of milk, which was found to contain a quantity of cowdung. The vendor was cautioned.

For this information I am indebted to the courtesy of the Superintendent of the Constabulary of this district.

Reviewing the statistics of the year, I am sure you will agree with me that is this the most satisfactory report ever made for this district, when we notice the birth-rate is greater than last year, and also greater than the death-rate of 1918. The Phthisis rate is also less, and the Infantile death-rate will compare favourably with that of any part of the country.

In concluding my Report, I must thank the Council for supporting the efforts of the officers in the execution of their work.

I am, yours faithfully,

CHARLES COURT.

TABLE I.—VITAL STATISTICS OF WHOLE DISTRICT during 1918 and previous years.

YEAR	Population estimated to middle of each year	BIRTHS			TOTAL DEATHS REGISTERED IN THE DISTRICT		TRANSFERABLE DEATHS		NETT DEATHS BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT			
		Un- corrected Number	Nett		Number	Rate	of Non- residents registered in the District	of Resi- dents not registered in the District	Under One Year of Age		At all Ages	
			Number	Rate					Number	Rate per 1,000 Nett Births	Number	Rate
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1913	3,838	84	86	22.4	57	14.8	1	12	30	348	68	17.7
1914	3,950	91	91	23.0	50	12.6	1	10	7	76	59	14.9
1915	3,616	60	62	15.6	44	12.1	3	9	7	112	50	13.8
1916	Est. Civilian Population :— For Births 3,880 For Deaths 3,566	..	58	14.9	59	..	..	16	9	155	75	21.03
1917	For Births 3,719 For Deaths 3,336	..	60	16.1	53	..	..	14	8	133	67	20.0
1918	For Births 3,673 For Deaths 3,278	..	68 Males.. 34 Females 34	18.5	52	..	..	5	4	58	57 Males.. 23 Females 34	17.3

TABLE IV.—*INFANTILE MORTALITY, 1918.*

Nett Deaths from stated causes at various Ages under 1 Year.

CAUSES OF DEATH			Under 1 Week	1-2 Weeks	2-3 Weeks	3-4 Weeks	Total under 4 Weeks	4 Weeks and under 3 Months	3 Months and under 6 Months	6 Months and under 9 Months	9 Months and under 12 Months	Total Deaths under 1 Year
All Causes	Certified	.. ..	1	..	1	2	1	1	..	..	..	4
	Uncertified	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
{	Small-pox	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Chicken-pox	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
{	Measles	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Scarlet Fever	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
{	Whooping Cough	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Diphtheria and Croup	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
{	Erysipelas	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Tuberculous Meningitis	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
{	Abdominal Tuberculosis	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Other Tuberculous Diseases	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
{	Meningitis (<i>not Tuberculous</i>)	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Convulsions	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
{	Laryngitis	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Bronchitis	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
{	Pneumonia (all forms)	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1
	Diarrhoea	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
{	Enteritis	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Gastritis	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
{	Syphilis	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Rickets	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
{	Suffocation, overlying	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Injury at Birth	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
{	Atelectasis	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Congenital Malformations	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
{	Premature Birth	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Atrophy, Debility & Marasmus	.. ..	1	..	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	2
{	Other Causes	.. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
TOTALS .....			..	1	..	1	2	1	1	..	..	4

Nett Births registered during the calendar year { legitimate.. 56 } 68
 { illegitimate 12 }

Nett Deaths registered during the calendar year of { legitimate infants.. 2 } 4
 { illegitimate infants 2 }

KIRKHAM URBAN SANITARY AUTHORITY.



*To the Chairman and Members of the Kirkham
Urban District Council.*

LADY AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of presenting my Seventh Annual Report on the work done in the Sanitary Department during 1918. During the year 39 notices have been served with regard to the abatement of 46 nuisances and the remedying of insanitary conditions. Several water closets had become blocked during the year ; in most cases the cause was due to insufficient flushing. These were remedied as soon as they were discovered. There has been an addition of nine water closets—two erected for the use of the boys' department of the Council School, Poulton Street, and six erected for the use of the employees of the mill in Mill Street, and one privy converted into a water closet in Station Road.

SCAVENGING.

The scavenging of the town has been carried out fairly satisfactorily by our men and carts, under my personal supervision, considering the difficulty which I have had to get men to do this kind of work.

The following is the number of water closets, tippler closets, latrine closets, pail closets, privies and ashbins in the town at the present time :—

Water closets	...	...	...	...	500
Tippler closets	...	...	...	...	28
Latrine closets	...	...	...	...	39
Pail closets	...	...	...	...	17
Privies	...	...	...	...	228
Ashbins	...	...	...	...	320
Dry ashpits	...	...	...	...	44

The pail closets and ashbins have been emptied once a week, and the privies when required, but the ashbins from the military hospitals have been emptied twice a week.

The number of privies, pail closets and ashbins emptied, and the loads of nightsoil, ashbin refuse and street sweepings carted during the year are as follows :—

Privies emptied and disinfected	...	...	...	1105
Privy pails	...	...	...	915
Ashbins emptied	...	...	...	16349
Loads of nightsoil carted to tip	...	...	...	1014
„ street-sweepings	...	...	...	246
„ ashbin refuse	...	...	...	443

INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND DISINFECTIONS.

The following is the list of cases of infectious diseases notified and the number of disinfections during the year :—

Number of cases notified of Scarlet Fever	...	1
„ „ Diphtheria	...	5
„ „ Enteric	...	1
„ „ Erysipelas	...	—
„ „ Puerperal Fever	...	1
„ „ Tuberculosis	...	7
„ „ Measles...	...	9
Number of Schools disinfected	...	4
Total number of disinfections	...	64

All the cases were visited upon receipt of notification. One case of Scarlet Fever, 4 of Diphtheria and 1 of Enteric were removed to Hospital ; 1 of Diphtheria, 9 of Measles and 1 of Puerperal Fever were treated at home. The Puerperal Fever case and four cases of Diphtheria terminated fatally. After the removal of the patients the rooms were thoroughly disinfected with formalin. All the cases that were treated at home were visited from time to time, disinfectants left, and instructions given as to the proper isolation of the patients to prevent the spread of the disease. At the termin-

ation of a case treated at home all the rooms were well disinfected with formalin. All the schools were disinfected, both during the summer and Christmas holidays.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS ACT.

There are 23 Workshops and 7 Bakehouses in the town, which have been visited periodically. Notice to lime-wash in two cases were complied with on being notified. With this exception the workshops have been found to comply with the requirements as regards cleanliness, air space and light. The bakehouses have also been kept under supervision, and these premises are well lighted and kept clean. Notice of occupation of a workshop at 82, Poulton Street, was received in March.

COMMON LODGING-HOUSES.

There is only one lodging-house, which is situated in Marsden Street. It is a large building, well arranged, and has sleeping accommodation for 42 men and 33 women, besides separate day-rooms for men and women on the ground floor. These premises have been regularly inspected, both during the day-time and the night, and no case of overcrowding or infectious diseases has occurred at these premises during the past seven years.

OFFENSIVE TRADES.

There are two offensive trades in the town—one a rag and bone store and the other tripe-boiling. These premises are visited regularly, and they have not been the source of any trouble.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.

There are only three Registered Slaughter-houses in the district, and they have been regularly inspected, both during slaughtering operations and after. They are all provided with a good supply of water for cleansing purposes, and they have been kept clean and well limewashed. All the refuse is removed immediately after slaughtering in galvanised bins with covers.

BLACK SMOKE NUISANCE.

Seventeen observations have been made of the amount of black smoke which issued from the factory chimneys of the town. The period of emission of black smoke varied from 2 to $3\frac{1}{2}$ minutes per hour during the observations.

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS & MILKSHOPS ORDERS.

There are 9 Registered Cowsheds and Dairies in the district. 123 inspections have been made of these places, which have been kept in a clean and sanitary condition.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT.

Total number of visits and inspections	6893
Number of preliminary notices served by	
Inspector	39
Number of nuisances remedied... ..	46
Number of statutory notices served by order	
of Council	0
Number of houses disinfected	56
Number of schools disinfected	4
Notice to limewash and cleanse	19
Filthy backyards cleansed under notice	16
Slopstone waste pipes repaired... ..	6
Drains opened out and defects rectified	24
New drains put in	3
Defective spouts and gutters repaired	5
Privies converted into water closets... ..	1
New water closets	8
Number of new ashbins provided	2
Notice to remove manure from stables, etc. ...	3
Nuisance from overcrowding	0
Number of drains tested with smoke test ...	4
Inspections to factories, workshops and bake-	
houses	168
Notice to limewash workshops	2
Number of inspections of drains and sanitary	
conveniences to schools	35

HOUSING, ETC., ACT.

Number of dwellings inspected under Section 17, 1909... ..	4
Number of dwelling-houses inspected under Housing Acts	16
Dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied without Closing Orders	2
The total number of occupied houses is ...	872
Number of dwelling-houses where the rent does not exceed £13	681
Number of dwelling-houses where the rent is more than £13	191

It will be seen from the above figures that the majority of houses in the town are working class houses. Taking the present population at 3,673, this works out at an average of 4·2 persons to each house.

There have been no plans submitted for new houses, and no cases of overcrowding during the year.

Owing to the scarcity and also the excessive price of building materials and labour at the present time, I consider that it will pay owners of cottage property to have their houses repaired and kept in as good condition as possible during the next ten years, because it will be impossible to build, except at a high price, and materials will for all those years be difficult to obtain. The condemning of houses during this time should be limited to those where the surrounding conditions make it impossible to keep the houses fit for habitation.

I am, yours obediently,

JAMES R. HOLMES,

M.I.H., A.R.S.I., N.D.A.,

Sanitary and Building Inspector.

